Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3609

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 1278

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJ: JOINT EMPLOYER-TRADE UNION COMMITTEE FORMED TO CONSIDER FUTURE OF BLACK WORKERS IN STEEL & ENGINEERING INDUSTRY

REF: JOHANNESBURG 607

- 1. EMPLOYER AND TRADE UNION MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL OF IRON, STEEL, ENGINEERING AND METALLURGICAL INDUSTRY MET IN JOHANNESBURG NOVEMBER 28 FOR PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING FUTURE OF INDUSTRY'S APPROXIMATELY 300,000 BLACK WORKERS.
- 2. DECISION ENDORSED BY RIGHT-WING TRADE UNION PARTICIPANTS WAS TO SET UP SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP OF INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL CHAIRMAN TOM MURRAY (WHO IS ALSO PRESIDENT OF TUCSA) TO INVESTIGATE INDUSTRY'S MANPOWER NEEDS & TO CONSIDER WAYS AND MEANS OF MEETING THEM (PRESUMABLY INCLUDING POSSIBILITY OF RAISING BLACKS TO EQUAL STATUS WITH WHITES, COLOUREDS AND INDIANS AS "EMPLOYEES" UNDER THE INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION ACT).
- 3. STATEMENT ISSUED FOLLOWING MEETING SAID"A STUDDY & ACTION COMMITT EE

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OF THREE EMPLOYER & THREE TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES, TOGETHER WITH

THE CHAIRMAN, WERE APPOINTED TO EXAMINE PROJECTONS WITH REGARD TO THE FORWARD REQUIREMENTS OF THE STEEL & ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES, BOTH ON A LONG-TERM AND SHORT-TERM BASIS, TO EXAMINE THE NEED TO TRAIN AND RETRAIN BOTH WHITE AND NON-WHITE PERSONNEL TO MEET THE ESTIMATED SHORTFALLS AND TO EXAMINE ALL MEANS WHEREBY THE INDUSTRIES MAY BE MANNED ON A BASIS THAT WILL ENSURE ITS MAINTENANCE OF INDUSTRIAL PEACE IN COLLABORATION WITH THE EMPLOYER ASSOCIATIONS AND THE TRADE UNION PARTIES TO THE COUNCIL."

4. COMMENT: SPECIAL SIGNIFCANCE OF THIS PARTICULAR COMMITTEE IS THAT IT SIGNIFIES HIGH-LEVEL AWARENESS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BASED ON SELF INTEREST THAT TIME HAS COME TO UPGRADE STATUS AND PROSPECTS OF OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF WORKERS IN ONE OF COUNTRY'S LARGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT INDUSTRIES.

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INDÚSTRY TAGS: ELAB, SF To: STATE

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